

REPAIR MEN ARE SHY OF "INSURANCE JOBS"

**Agency Service Departments
Don't Like This Sort
of Work.**

CHARGE FOR ESTIMATES

**That Scheme, at Least, Saves
Them From One Kind
of Imposition.**

There is a never ending struggle between the superintendent of the repair shop or service department of the automobile concern and the insurance firm, which occasionally has to have a car repaired. "Insurance jobs" are exceedingly distasteful to the repair man. There are firms which can always be depended upon to do the work on a car much cheaper than the service department will attempt to do it. This is often the consideration which proves most attractive to the insurance company.

The spirit which actuates the "scraping canvas" is entirely different from that which moves the repair department. If a car has been in the shop for an extended time, the service department is brought in, the service department is the branch or agency which sells it; the compelling idea is to put the car into such shape that it will be as good as new or as near that as can be arranged. The "scraping canvas" men, on the other hand, are called "dope jobs," things that will look all right and will probably last a limited time, although they are hardly depended upon to stand up.

It is a good idea for departments hesitate about estimating on repair jobs because they know that the very schedule of needed repairs that they make up at expense to themselves will simply be used by the insurance concerns as guides to other houses which do the work at less cost.

For instance there is one concern whose foreman will make an estimate only on a cash payment of \$100. His reason is this: To take down a car and to inspect it thoroughly in every part and to make sure just how much new stuff must be put in and what hours of labor are necessary to complete the work and so to turn it out as good a car as it was before the accident are things which mean a great many hours of time used by mechanics and also call for a large amount of exact mechanical knowledge, which certainly deserves being paid for.

If it was a surety that the job would be turned in to his repair shop he probably would not be disposed to charge for making the estimate, but he knows that if he prepares a full list, giving in detail the things that will have to be done, chances are that this will be taken at once to some other concern, whose mechanics may not get the same grade of wages as do his, and who are able when it is plainly indicated to them just what is necessary to be done, to do the work at perhaps anywhere from 30 to 45 per cent. less than the regular repair shop would charge.

Further, again, not having the same pride in the work or not being impelled by any feeling that it will reflect on the merits of the car if the job is not well done, the outside concern is not going to put the same careful attention on things that would in the regular repair shop would do.

Furthermore, inasmuch as the repairer is not going to be paid for his labor, it is likely to him will have to come for needed parts back to the agency repair shop, and as selling these parts is necessarily a source of a certain amount of profit without any chance of loss, this is another reason why rather than undertake the annoyance of the insurance company's work it is refused by the average com-

The arrangements cannot be made with the insurance company as they can be made with owner direct and there are certain requests for discounts and rebates which are likely to be made by the insurance concern, which also are distasteful to the automobile agency. This is another very important reason why "insurance jobs" are not popular with the repair

Very often a good deal more work is put on the replacing of the body and patching it up than is done on the running gear of the machine itself by the outside repair concern, and although this makes a nice looking piece of work when it is completed, it cannot be expected to go

The making of an estimate of hand is nearly an impossibility, especially when a car has been damaged by fire. There may be a hundred and one things to do that do not appear on the surface, but some repair men will undertake to do a job for almost nothing and then of course must slight some part of it in order to come out ahead of the game. How the situation can be met with satisfaction to all concerned is a problem

The average result is that the owner gets something the worst of it.

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